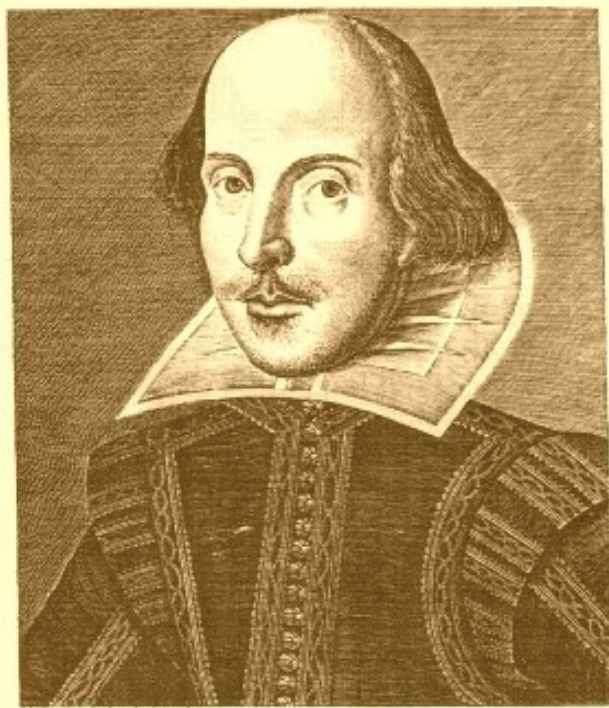


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to Modern English - for contemporary
readers and performers

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Shakespeare For White Trash: Henry V

Classic literature translated into Modern English by Crad Kilodney

October 7, 2010 – Author’s Note:

“Shakespeare For White Trash” is a series of condensed rewrites designed to make Shakespeare understandable and enjoyable to those who have little or no knowledge of him. The plots and characters are unchanged, but everything else has been radically restyled. Read my versions and you’ll be a Shakespeare fan forever!

These plays are intended to be performed, as well as read.

Main Characters

King Henry V

Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester; John, Duke of Bedford; Thomas, Duke of Clarence — brothers of King Henry

Duke of Exeter — Henry’s uncle, and a military commander

Duke of York — Henry’s cousin

Earls of Salisbury, Westmoreland, and Warwick — advisors and military commanders of Henry

Archbishop of Canterbury

Bishop of Ely

Cambridge, Scroop, and Grey — traitors to Henry (Additional info is given in Act 2, Scene 2.)

Erpingham, Gower, Fluellen, Macmorris, and Jamy — officers in Henry’s army

Bates, Court, and Williams — English soldiers

Nym, Bardolph, and Pistol — commoners from London serving in the English army

Boy — page to Sir John Falstaff

Hostess Quickly — proprietress of the Boar’s Head Tavern in London

English Herald

Montjoy — French Herald

French Ambassador

King of France (Unnamed by Shakespeare, but he was Charles VI)

Louis, the Dauphin (The term “Dauphin” was given to the Crown Prince of France — i.e., the heir to the throne. Shakespeare doesn’t explain what happened to Louis at the Battle of Agincourt. He is simply not mentioned again. Historically, Louis was not at Agincourt and died two months afterwards from an illness.)

Queen Isabel — Queen of France

Katherine — daughter of the King of France

Alice — waiting-lady to Katherine

Governor of Harfleur

Captain of the English Bowmen (not in the original)

Constable of France

Dukes of Orleans, Bretagne, Bourbon, and Burgundy; Earl of Grandpre; Lord Rambures — French nobles

Chorus (Narrator)

(Monsieur Le Fer is deleted)

Gist of the story: Henry V is convinced that he has a claim to the throne of France, based on his ancestry. When his demands are rebuffed, he takes an army to invade France. After laying siege to the town of Harfleur, he marches his army north toward Calais but is confronted by much stronger French forces at Agincourt. Despite being outnumbered by as many as six to one, the English win an astonishing and very one-sided victory. The French are forced to make peace and accede to Henry’s demands. Henry marries the French King’s daughter, Katherine, and is named heir to the throne of France.

(The Battle of Agincourt on October 25, 1415, is one of the most noteworthy battles in military history and is the focus of the play. You will find an excellent article about it on Wikipedia. If you search the location on Google Maps, be sure to search “Azincourt”, not “Agincourt”. The historic Agincourt is now called Azincourt; what appears on the maps now as Agincourt is a different, unrelated place. The numbers involved in the battle are not known for sure, but a rough estimate would be 10,000 English versus 60,000 French. Several factors contributed to the English victory: 1) the configuration of the battlefield largely neutralized the numerical superiority of the French; 2) muddy turf caused the heavily-armoured French to sink into it; 3) English bowmen equipped with longbows were extremely effective; 4) there was a lack of control by the French over their attack. The play is very nationalistic

in tone, and Henry is presented as heroic. If you're a war-lover, you'll love this play. If you're a peacenick, you'll hate it. Some scholars judge Henry harshly for what they consider to be acts of cruelty, but Shakespeare glosses over them. His audiences wanted victory, glory, and a hero for England, and that's what they got. Historical note: Shakespeare compresses time and gives us the impression that peace between England and France came quickly after the Battle of Agincourt. In fact, the Treaty of Troyes was not signed until 1420.)

Prologue. *The Chorus (a narrator) comes in.*

Chorus: Good evening, lovers of history—lovers of war!—For what else makes history?—Tonight we take you back in time to 1415, when the audacious and fearless King Henry the Fifth took his small army to France, to a place called Agincourt, and there made history. Our modest stage and humble players can only suggest what happened there. Your imagination must fill this space with the horror—the blood—the mangled bodies—the terror—and the chaos of that historic battle. Outnumbered six to one, the English occupied a narrow strip of land. Their principal weapon was the longbow. Against them was a French army with soldiers clad in heavy armour.—The French cavalry attack. The English bowmen shoot. The horses are struck and run back into the French lines. The first wave of French soldiers attack, but they sink into the mud. The second wave crushes in from behind. The English bowmen are cutting them to pieces. Now the fighting is hand to hand. The French can hardly move. They are being decimated by the English. It's total chaos. It's a calamity!—Oh, the blood!—The carnage!—Now clear your minds and prepare to see it all. If you become frightened or squeamish, close your eyes and tell yourselves, “No! It's not happening! It's only a play!”—Ah, but it is happening—because it happened. Protect yourselves. Duck if you have to. The English longbow is a deadly weapon. And the English bowmen know how to use it.

(He leaves.)

Act 1, Scene 1. *An antechamber in the King's palace in London. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Ely come in.*

Canterbury: If Parliament passes that bill, the church will lose more than half of its real estate. And on top of that, we'll have to pay a thousand pounds a year into the treasury.

Ely: It's unthinkable. What can we do to stop it?

Canterbury: Well, I'm counting on the King to take our side.

Ely: He loves the church. There's no doubt of that.

Canterbury: He does. And it's remarkable because when he was younger, he was—well—you know.

Ely: A wild kid.

Canterbury: Yes. And then when his father died, he changed completely. He became a totally serious King.

Ely: I'm certainly glad for that.

Canterbury: And what a mind he has. He can discuss theology, government, politics, war—anything. He's a learned man. How such an intelligent King came out of such an unpromising boy is—well, it's like a miracle.

Ely: Maybe he was really smart and serious all along, but he wanted to keep it hidden.

Canterbury: You could be right about that.

Ely: How does he feel about this bill that's before Parliament?

Canterbury: He's sort of neutral—maybe leaning a bit to our side. I made him a generous offer in behalf of the church. And I started to explain to him that he has a claim to the throne of France. You know his great-grandfather, Edward the Third, was related to Philip the Fourth of France. Philip was Edward's grandfather.

Ely: Yes, yes. Philip's daughter was Isabella, and she married Edward the Second. And their son was Edward the Third. What did he say about that?

Canterbury: He was interested, but I didn't get a chance to explain it in detail because just then the French ambassador showed up and wanted to speak to him. They're probably in conference right now.

Ely: I'd sure like to know what they're saying.

Canterbury: Yes.—Why don't we, you know, sort of barge in? After all, I'm the Archbishop of Canterbury, and you're the Bishop of Ely. I think we can do that.

Ely: Yes, I should think so. Let's go.

(They leave.)

Act 1, Scene 2. *In the King's palace. King Henry comes in with his three brothers—Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester; John, Duke of Bedford; Thomas, Duke of Clarence—and the Duke of Exeter, the Earl of Warwick, and the Earl of Westmoreland, plus Attendants.*

King Henry: Where's the Archbishop of Canterbury?

Exeter: He's not here.

Westmoreland: Do you want to speak to the French ambassador, my lord?

King Henry: Not yet. I wanted to talk to Canterbury about this matter of the French throne.

(Canterbury and Ely come in.)

Canterbury: God's blessings on you, sir!

King Henry: Ah, there you are, Canterbury—and my lord of Ely.—Welcome.

Ely: God save you, sir.

King Henry: Thank you. You two came in at just the right time.—Canterbury, I need you to clear up this business about that so-called Salic law that they have in France. Does it mean that I do or I don't have

a claim to the throne of France? And don't bullshit me either, because I don't want to drag thousands of men into a war if I don't have proper justification.

Canterbury: I won't bullshit you, my lord. I've studied this matter very carefully, and I know I'm right. The Salic law says that the right of inheritance can only pass through sons, not daughters. However, that was only meant to apply to certain lands settled by the French in Germany. They made that law because the German women were unsuitable to inherit property. The French themselves have ignored it when it suited them. In two instances claims to the throne have been made based on a line of descent through a female. So they can't use the Salic law against you now. Edward the Third was the son of Edward the Second and Isabella of France. Isabella was the second child of Philip the Fourth. His first child was Louis the Tenth. He died without any heirs. Isabella was next in line after Louis, but she was skipped over. They've had six kings since then.

King Henry: Well! They sure are a bunch of nervy bastards, aren't they?

Canterbury: They sure are.

King Henry: They probably thought no one would notice, and after a while no one would even remember.

Canterbury: Aha! Nothing slips past the church, my lord. We're too clever.

King Henry: So I'm perfectly justified to demand the throne of France, and if the French say no, I can make war on them.

Canterbury: Yes, indeed—and you should. Think of your ancestors—your great-grandfather Edward the Third and your great-uncle Edward the Black Prince, who slaughtered those miserable French left and right.

Ely: You're just like them, my lord. You're powerful. You're brave. And you're in the prime of life. Victory and glory are waiting for you.

Exeter: It's in your blood, my lord. You're Henry the Fifth. Every king in the world knows what he'd do in your place, and probably wishes he were.

Westmoreland: It's plain as day, my lord. You've got good reason on your side. You have the army. You have the money. Everyone's behind you.

Canterbury: Especially the church. And we've got deep pockets.

King Henry: It's good. It's good. I like it. But what about the Scots? If we take our army to France, they'll invade while we're gone.

Canterbury: You don't have to take all your forces. Take one-fourth. That's plenty.

Westmoreland: Right. The French suck when it comes to fighting.

Exeter: You said it.

King Henry: Right, right, right.—Okay, then. I'll take the throne of France—or die trying.—Now let me talk to the French ambassador.

(He nods to somebody, who goes out and returns immediately with the French Ambassador and his Aide. The Aide is holding a box.)

Ambassador: Greetings, your Majesty.

King Henry: Welcome. I understand that you come from the Dauphin, not the King. Is that right?

Ambassador: Yes, my lord—Prince Louis.

King Henry: And what does he have to say?

Ambassador: Recently, my lord, you sent word to the King that you were claiming certain dukedoms in France in the name of Edward the Third. The Prince says that your claim is absurd and frivolous. And he sends you this gift, which he says will better occupy your time.

(The Aide puts the box on the floor.)

King Henry (To Exeter): Uncle, why don't you open it.

(Exeter opens the box and takes out several tennis balls.)

Exeter: Tennis balls.

King Henry: The Dauphin has such a sense of humour, doesn't he? I should take my tennis racket to France and slam those balls into his head. But I have an even better idea. Suppose I used cannonballs instead?

Ambassador: Oh!—Sir!

King Henry: Go back and tell your Prince that I intend to take not only the dukedoms but the throne of France itself. But I thank him for the tennis balls anyway. After all, we English are a sporting people. *(To the Attendants)* Show them out.

(The Attendants escort the Ambassador and Aide out.)

Exeter: That was too cool.

King Henry: Thank you, uncle.—Now let's start making plans—for our road trip!

(They all leave with a trumpet flourish.)

*(The **Prologue** to Act 2 is deleted.)*

Act 2, Scene 1. *A London street. Corporal Nym meets Lieutenant Bardolph.*

Bardolph: Corporal Nym, wassup?

Nym: Lieutenant Bardolph. Not much.

Bardolph: Are you and Ensign Pistol still on the outs with each other, or have you patched up?

Nym: I don't care one way or the other. It's up to him.

Bardolph: Well, we're all going to France with the King, so we ought to be friends, don't you think?

Nym: Either I live or I die. Friendship has nothing to do with it.

Bardolph: I guess you're still sore at him because he married your old girlfriend, Nell Quickly.

[Author's note: This is surprising because in Henry IV, Part Two, Nell Quickly despised Pistol.]

Nym: Women are what they are, and men are what they are—so fuck it.

(Pistol and Hostess Quickly come in.)

Bardolph: Here they are. Be polite.—Hello, Pistol. Hello, madam. Host and hostess—how nice.

Pistol: Host? What do you mean—host? We're not taking in lodgers.

Hostess Q: No. People will think we're running a whorehouse.

Nym: Well, that's the sort of neighbourhood you're in.

Pistol (Drawing his sword): What! Are you looking for a fight?

Nym (Drawing his sword): Are you?

Hostess: Please don't fight! I don't want to see any assaults of batteries!

Nym (To Pistol): Nuts to you!

Pistol: Get a haircut, you poodle!

Nym: You want a piece of me, come and get it!

Pistol: No piece of you is worth having. I'm above you.

Bardolph (Drawing his sword): Stop it right now! Whoever strikes first is going to get it from me!

(Pistol and Nym put their swords away.)

Pistol (To Nym): I'll get you later.

Nym: No, I'll get you.

Bardolph: Knock it off!

(The Boy comes in.)

Boy: Master Pistol—madam—you must come at once. Sir John Falstaff is very sick. He's in bed.

Hostess Q: Oh, dear. Poor Sir John. Ever since the King broke off with him, he hasn't been the same.

[Author's note: Sir John Falstaff was one of King Henry's disreputable friends when he was the young "Prince Hal" in Henry IV, Parts One and Two. When he became King, he broke off with Falstaff.] (To the Boy) Let's go.

(Hostess Quickly and the Boy leave.)

Bardolph: Now, are you two going to make up, or not?

Pistol: Making up is for sissies.

Nym: You still owe me eight shillings on that bet.

Pistol: Sue me for it.

Nym: No, you pay me now.

Pistol: No, I won't.

Bardolph: I'm getting tired of this. You guys are going to make peace right now.

Pistol: I'll pay him six shillings—and the rest in goodwill. How's that?

Nym: Six shillings in cash.

Pistol: Yes. Cash.

Nym: All right, then.

(Hostess Quickly returns.)

Hostess Q: You'd better come right away if you want to take your leave of Sir John. I don't think he's going to last much longer.

Nym: Too bad. And all because the King rejected him.

Pistol: Broke his heart in a thousand pieces, and each one smaller than the others.

Nym: Still, we mustn't blame the King. He does what he thinks is right.

Pistol: Anyway, we'd better go see Sir John before the angels take him away.

Nym: Yes, we'd better.

(They all leave.)

Act 2, Scene 2. *In Southampton. Exeter, Bedford, and Westmoreland come in.*

Bedford: When there's a war, there are always traitors. So, in a way, I'm not surprised.

Exeter: Some people can be bought.

Westmoreland: It's a good think the King found out in time.

Bedford: I suppose he'll execute them.

Exeter: Yes, without a doubt.

Westmoreland: Who would have thought it? Cambridge, Scroop, and Grey.

Bedford: That's what surprises me. Three respectable men like that selling out to the French.

Westmoreland: Oh!—I see them coming.—And it looks like they don't know they've been found out. This should be interesting.

(King Henry comes in with Cambridge, Scroop, and Grey, plus Attendants. [Author's note: Richard, Earl of Cambridge, was from the York branch of the family tree. He was first cousin once-removed to Henry V and grandfather to Edward IV and Richard III. The Scroops had previously opposed Henry IV because they were loyal to Richard II, who got overthrown. The Greys later became in-laws of Edward IV when the widow Lady Grey {a.k.a. Elizabeth Woodville, the first commoner to become Queen of England} remarried to Edward IV.])

King Henry (To Cambridge, Scroop, and Grey): It's very nice of you fellows to come to Southampton to see me off.

Cambridge: For you, cousin, anything. I'm only sorry to be staying behind.

Scroop and Grey: Yes, yes.

King Henry: You'll all have important duties while I'm away killing Frenchmen—ha, ha!

Scroop: I have no doubt you'll sweep them aside like dust. You can count on your army, just as you can count on every citizen here at home.

Grey: Well said, Scroop. Our King is loved by every red-blooded Englishman.

Cambridge: Lord Grey states the obvious.

King Henry: You're all very kind. I'm getting really psyched up for this, believe me.—Oh, before I forget.—Exeter, you remember that stupid drunk you arrested yesterday for shouting insults at me?

Exeter: Yes. What do you want me to do with him?

King Henry: Let him go.

Exeter: Let him go? Really?

King Henry: Sure. The guy had too much to drink and he got stupid for a moment. I'm willing to overlook it.

Scroop: Oh, but my lord, you must punish him—and severely.

King Henry: Nah. It's not that big a deal.

Cambridge: But my lord, you have to make an example of him.

Grey: Yes, yes, Cambridge is right. You're the King, after all. If the man insulted you, you've got to punish him.

King Henry: Aw, hell. If I punished a guy for something minor like shooting his mouth off when he was drunk, what would I do if somebody did something really serious—and assuming he was sober and had time to think about it?

Scroop: Let the punishment fit the crime, sir. The public must see wickedness punished for the sake of their moral instruction—and your dignity.

Cambridge: Absolutely. No question.

Grey: No one could possibly criticize you for that, my lord. Everyone would be on your side.

King Henry: Heh, heh—ah, well.—Oh, by the way, I have your commissions. These will authorize you to do certain things in my absence. *(He hands them papers.)* I hope they meet with your approval.

(Cambridge, Scroop, and Grey read the papers and are shocked.)

Cambridge: My lord—I—I confess.

Scroop: My lord—I don't know what to say.

Grey (On his knees): My lord—have mercy on us.

King Henry: Oh, now you believe in mercy, do you? A minute ago you wanted me to punish some poor slob for shooting his mouth off. And for something more serious, well, let the punishment fit the crime—in this case, conspiring to assassinate the King.

Scroop: My lord—we're sorry.

King Henry: You guys are a big disappointment to me. Accepting money to kill me. Are you that hard up? Or do you really hate me that much?—Don't bother to say anything. You'll only lose what little dignity you have left.—Cambridge, my own cousin. I never did a bad thing to you in my life. I was always good to you. I always respected you.—And you, Scroop. I trusted you. I confided in you. I sought your advice. Anything you wanted from me, you would've gotten—like that *(Snaps his fingers)*.—And you, Grey—the epitome of the proper noble Englishman. You would've murdered your King and sold out your country.—I don't know what devil came out of hell to turn you men into traitors. You're a disgrace. All you can do is ask God to forgive your sins. You won't get any mercy from me.

(Westmoreland beckons offstage, and several Guards come in immediately.)

Westmoreland (To the Guards): Take them away for execution.

(The Guards take out the three traitors.)

King Henry: Thank you, cousin. *(He takes a deep breath.)* Well! Now that that's taken care of, I'm sure God really is on our side. Let's get ready to sail.

(They all leave.)

Act 2, Scene 3. *Outside the Boar's Head Tavern in London. Pistol, Nym, Bardolph, the Boy, and Hostess Quickly come in.*

Hostess Q: Husband, let me go with you as far as Staines.

Pistol: No, don't bother. Stay and mind the store. Besides, I'm too depressed over Falstaff's death.

Nym: It's so sad.

Boy: Yes. He was my master. I liked him.

Bardolph: I wish I were with him now—either in heaven or in hell.

Hostess Q: Oh, he's not in hell. He's with the innocent souls. *(Sighs)* I knew he was approaching the end. He was fumbling with the sheets and complaining how cold he was. And he was cold, too. I felt his feet. Cold as ice.

Nym: I heard he cursed against drinking.

Hostess Q: Yes.

Bardolph: And women.

Hostess: No, not women.

Boy: Yes. He said they were devils incarnate.

Hostess Q: Well, he never liked the colour of carnations.

Boy: He cursed against the Whore of Babylon. Did he know her?

Hostess Q: Certainly not. He was never in Babylon in his whole life.

Nym: We should get moving. The King's probably already left Southampton.

Pistol: Yes, yes.—My dear, give me a kiss. *(He kisses Hostess Quickly.)* And remember what I told you. In God we trust, but all others pay cash. Watch your expenses. And stay home. Don't go anywhere.

Hostess Q: Yes, yes.

Pistol: All right, fellows, let's be off. We'll drink the blood of the French!

Boy: Ewww!

Pistol: Figuratively speaking.

(The others say goodbye to Hostess Quickly and then all leave.)

Act 2, Scene 4. *In the palace of the French King. The King comes in with the Dauphin, the Constable of France, and various Lords. [Author's note: Since Shakespeare doesn't refer to the King by name, his speech prefix is simply "France".])*

France: The English army is already on French soil, so you lords had better put up a show of force. We don't want to underestimate them. We must prepare our defenses.

Dauphin: Of course, we should prepare, father, but I don't take that English King seriously. He's just a young jerk.

Constable: I disagree, my lord Prince. Just ask the ambassador how King Henry received him. He's not the shallow kid we always assumed he was.

Dauphin: I say he is. But it doesn't matter. We'll be ready for him.

France: Don't forget where King Henry comes from. Think of Edward the Third and Edward the Black Prince. You won't find any weaklings in that family tree.

(A Messenger comes in.)

Messenger: My lord, an ambassador from King Henry is here to see you.

France: All right. *(To the Lords)* Lords, bring him in.

(The Messenger and some Lords go out.)

Dauphin: King Henry! Tell him to *baiser* himself! If you act tough, he'll back off.

France: Take it easy. I'm going to be calm about this.

(The Lords return with Exeter and his party.)

Exeter: Greetings to your Majesty from King Henry.

France: Welcome, sir. All right, I'm listening.

Exeter: The King demands that you give up the throne of France, which rightfully belongs to him, based on his ancestry. I have here the proof of his claim, which is clearly established.

(Exeter hands the King a document, which he looks at briefly.)

France: Mm—yes—well—he's related to Isabella. We already knew that. And what if I just say no?

Exeter: Then he'll take the throne by force, and many of your people will die, and it'll be your fault.—And I have a message for the Dauphin, too, if he's here.

Dauphin: I'm the Dauphin. What does King Henry have to say to me?

Exeter: My King would convey his contempt for you suitably if his French were better. Suffice it to say that if your father does not agree to his demands, he will reply to your tennis ball insult with a generous dose of English steel.

Dauphin: You can tell your King that I look forward to fighting him if he's stupid enough to pick a fight with us.

Exeter: You misjudge my King at your own peril.

France: Peace!—Both of you.—*(To Exeter)* I want to think about it. I'll give you an answer tomorrow.

Exeter: Don't make my King wait too long. He's in a fighting mood.

France: Yes. yes. Tomorrow. *(He rises.)* I believe this conference is over.

(Everyone leaves.)

*(The **Prologue** to Act 3 is deleted.)*

Act 3, Scene 1. *A field in France. King Henry comes in with Exeter, Bedford, Gloucester, and Soldiers.*

King Henry (Pointing): That's Harfleur—one of their fortified towns. And there's where we can break through the wall.

Exeter: You could've cut a deal with the King of France, you know.

King Henry: Yeah, right. Marry his daughter Katherine and get a few minor dukedoms as her dowry. I'm not letting them get off that cheap. *(To the Soldiers and offstage by suggestion)* Get the ladders against that wall! Attack, lads! Show 'em what you're made of! Kick their asses! Cut 'em to pieces! Eat their hearts! We are English! Remember that! We are English—and we conquer!—Everyone! Let's go!

(All leave to sounds of battle.)

Act 3, Scene 2. *Near Harfleur, the besieged town. Nym, Bardolph, Pistol, and the Boy come in.*

Bardolph: We must attack! Attack! Into the breach!

(Bardolph just stands there. His body language shows that he doesn't want to attack.)

Nym: Please, Lieutenant. The fighting is too violent. And I have a headache. Perhaps we could wait until it's, you know, a little quieter.

Pistol: I can see them dying from here.—Look at them.—I guess that's the way to immortality.

Nym: No. It's called death.

Bardolph: Don't say the D-word!

Boy: I want to go back to London and drink beer at the Boar's Head.

Pistol: You and me both.

(Fluellen comes in.)

Fluellen: What are you guys hanging around here for? Get in there and fight!

Pistol: Oh, please, Captain Fluellen. Be a pal. Don't send us in there.

Nym: I have an upset stomach. I can't go to war today. Excuse me.

(Nym runs away.)

Bardolph and Pistol: Me, too!

(Bardolph and Pistol run away.)

Fluellen: Hey, wait! You come back here!

(Fluellen leaves, chasing them. The Boy is left alone.)

Boy: What a bunch of fakers—Bardolph, Pistol, and Nym. The only thing they're good for is looting. In Calais they stole a shovel and sold it for a nickel. And they expect me to steal, too. I may be young, but I know enough not to waste my time serving losers like them.—Excuse me, I gotta go wee.

(He leaves. Then Fluellen returns and meets Gower coming in from the other side.)

Gower: Captain Fluellen, you're needed at the tunnels. The Duke of Gloucester wants to talk to you.

Fluellen: Oh, to hell with the tunnels. He's doing them all wrong. He doesn't understand the tactics. The enemy is digging right underneath us. They'll blow us up—don't you see?

Gower: Well, Gloucester's in charge of the siege, and he's been getting advice from Captain Macmorris.

Fluellen: Pfff!—That Irishman.—Macmorris is an idiot. What does he know about tactics? He hasn't studied the Romans the way I have.

Gower: Well, you can tell him so. Here he comes with Captain Jamy, the Scottish captain.

Fluellen: Oh, good. Jamy understands these things.

(Macmorris and Jamy come in.)

Jamy: Hello, Captain Fluellen.

Fluellen: Hello, Captain Jamy—Captain Macmorris.

Macmorris: Hello.

Gower: Captain Macmorris, are the tunnels finished?

Macmorris: No. We stopped work when the retreat was sounded. The whole thing's a mess. I could've blown up the whole town in an hour.

Fluellen: Ah—yes—I wanted to discuss this tactical point with you—within the context of the Roman wars—purely a point of technicality, you understand—to make sure I'm not drawing the wrong conclusions from the battles of Drepanum in 249 B.C. and Aegates in 241 B.C.—which, I think, are fair examples of—

Jamy: What?

Macmorris: Hey, there's a siege going on. This is no time for an academic discussion. We have to get in there and kill Frenchmen.

Jamy: Yes, we'll do that. Hold on.—What did you want to say, Captain Fluellen?

Fluellen: I just wanted to ask Captain Macmorris—Now, sir, if I may have a word. There are not too many of your country—

Macmorris (Angrily): What do you mean—my country? Is there something wrong with my country?

Fluellen: Now, sir, you mustn't take offense where none is intended—especially since I'm as good a man as you, and my country is as good as yours.

Macmorris: Is that so? As a proud Irishman, I ought to—*(Raises his fist)*.

Gower: Now, now, come on, both of you. You're being hypersensitive.

Jamy: Yes. One mustn't be hypersensitive—especially in wartime.

(A trumpet sounds.)

Gower: Oh!—Sounds like the town is asking for a cease-fire. They must be wanting to negotiate.

Macmorris: That's fine with me.

(Macmorris starts to leave, with the others following. Fluellen is speaking as they go out.)

Fluellen: Captain Macmorris, when we have a few minutes, I'd like to explain to you about the Roman tactics, which I've studied—especially the Punic Wars and, of course, Caesar's conquest of—

Act 3, Scene 3. *Outside the wall of Harfleur. King Henry comes in with his party. The heads of citizens and the Governor of Harfleur appear at the top of the wall.*

King Henry: Governor of Harfleur, I've given you time to think it over. Surrender the town or I'll destroy it, building by building, right down to the foundations. I'll cut the throat of every man, I'll strangle your children, and I'll let my soldiers rape all your women. And it'll all be your fault. So what's it gonna be?

Governor: We asked the Dauphin to send help, but he's not able to at this time. It's pointless for us to continue to resist. Therefore, we surrender the town to you and place ourselves at your mercy. We are opening the gates.

(The Governor's face disappears. Then the gates open.)

King Henry (To Exeter): Exeter, you're in charge of securing the town. Get ready in case the French show up. We'll stay here tonight, but tomorrow I have to take most of the army and march them to Calais and get them back to England. This siege took longer than I expected, and I don't want to be fighting when the winter comes. I've got a lot of sick men.

Exeter: All right.

(They all leave through the gates.)

Act 3, Scene 4. *This scene is deleted.*

Act 3, Scene 5. *The palace at Rouen. The King of France comes in with the Dauphin, the Constable, the Duke of Bretagne, and other Lords and Attendants. [Author's note: Some texts have the Duke of Bourbon instead of the Duke of Bretagne.]*

France: He must be across the River Somme by now.

Constable: If we don't stop him, he'll take over the whole country.

Dauphin: These are the ancestors of the Normans, you know. Normans mating with barbarians. And now they're coming back.

Bretagne: Fucking Normans! I'll die in a pig sty before I lose my estate to those sons of bitches!

Constable: I don't know where they get their spirit. They live in a country with a miserable climate. They eat the worst food of anybody. I mean, would you eat English food?

Bretagne: Ugh! It's hardly fit for dogs.

Constable: And what do they drink? Bitter beer. It's disgusting.

Bretagne: Dreadful stuff.

Constable: And everyone knows they're a cold-blooded people. How can they be doing this to us?

Dauphin: Our women think we're all wimps. They say that French men just don't have any balls any more, so they might as well marry the English and have normal children.

France: Where's Montjoy? Where's my herald? I want to send him to the English King and see if we can put a stop to this.—You, Lord Constable, muster all our forces.—And all of you lords. I'm depending on you. Pass the word. I want every duke, every baron, and every knight to collect all their forces. Orleans—Bourbon—Berri—Brabant—Chatillon—Beaumont—Fauconberg—I want everyone in on this. I want to crush those English bastards. And I want you to bring me that English King here as a prisoner.

Constable: We can muster five or six times as many men as he has. When he sees what he's facing, he'll know he's done for. He'll have to pay a ransom to be allowed to leave in one piece.

France: Right. That's a good idea. I'll send Montjoy to deliver an ultimatum and see what that English criminal is willing to pay for the lives of all his men.

Dauphin: What about me, father? I want to be in this fight.

France: Well—I'll think about it.—Lord Constable, if it comes down to war, I expect to get a good report from you. I want to hear that this invasion has been crushed.

Constable: I promise you will, my lord.

(They all leave.)

Act 3, Scene 6. *The English camp in Picardy. [Author's note: Shakespeare is not specific about location. Picardy is the historical name of a region in northwest France. Henry's army is, indeed, across the Somme, but they had to go far out of their way to the east to get past French forces marking their position. Now they are marching roughly northwest and are trying to get to Calais and safety. At this point they are about forty miles short of their goal and have reached Blangy-sur-Ternoise. On the other side of the Ternoise is the town of Maisoncelles, and just beyond that the French are blocking the way at Agincourt.] Gower and Fluellen meet coming in from opposite sides.*

Gower: Captain Fluellen, what's happening at the bridge?

Fluellen: We've got it, thanks to Lord Exeter. The French were trying to destroy it, but he chased them off.

Gower: That's a relief. We need that bridge to get to Calais.

Fluellen: Oh, and there was a very brave man who fought on our side—an ensign named Pistol.

Gower: Pistol? Do I know him?

Fluellen: Here he comes now.

(Pistol comes in.)

Pistol: Captain Fluellen, I need to ask a favour of you.

Fluellen: Of course. What is it?

Pistol: Well, you see, a friend of mine—a good, loyal soldier named Bardolph—he's in a bit of trouble. It seems he, uh—well, he sort of—stole—a holy object from a church, and Lord Exeter intends to hang him for it. Now, really, sir, is one little trinket from a church worth hanging a man for? You're friends with Lord Exeter. Surely you can talk to him and get him to change his mind.

Fluellen: Ah, I see. A case of looting. That sort of thing does happen sometimes in war, unfortunately.

Pistol: Exactly, sir. It's not like it's a big deal or something.

Fluellen: Oh, but it is a big deal. We're not going to allow looting. Lord Exeter is entirely within his rights to hang the man.

Pistol: But sir!

Fluellen: It's a question of discipline, don't you see?

Pistol: Discipline!—And I thought you were a good guy. Well, to hell with you!

(Pistol walks out.)

Fluellen: I don't care.

Gower: Now I remember that guy! Pistol! Why, he's nothing but a petty thief.

Fluellen: Oh? I thought he was a good soldier, actually. He told me how he had fought at the bridge.—Well, it's all right. He's just upset about his friend.

Gower: Take my word for it, he's a goddamn phoney. He's no good. Don't let him fool you. I know his type. He's no military hero. He's a fraud.

Fluellen: Really?—Oh.—I didn't realize.—Well, then, I'll just have a word with him when I get a chance.

(King Henry and Gloucester come in, with Soldiers.)

Fluellen: Your Majesty!

King Henry: Fluellen, what's the situation at the bridge?

Fluellen: Your uncle the Duke of Exeter has secured the bridge. And I can tell you that he fought very bravely.

King Henry: What were our losses?

Fluellen: No losses, my lord. The French got all the worst of it.—Oh, but there is one man on our side that Lord Exeter intends to hang for robbing a church. His name is Bardolph. Do you know him, sir?

King Henry: Yes, I know him. He's a drunk and a thief. Let him hang. I can't allow looting here in France. I'm going to be the next King. I don't want these people to feel mistreated.

(A trumpet sounds. Montjoy, the French Herald, comes in.)

Montjoy: I come from the King of France, sir.

King Henry: Yeah, I can see you're a herald. All right, what's the message?

Montjoy: Sir, the King of France says he could have wiped you out at Harfleur, but he thought it better to wait. Now he expects to be paid compensation for all the damage you've caused and all the losses to our citizens. If you persist in this foolish enterprise, you will only be guaranteeing the deaths of everyone in your army.

King Henry: Interesting.—Nice shoes, by the way. Did you get them in Paris?

Montjoy: No, sir. Rouen.

King Henry: I'll have to go shopping there, first chance I get. So what's your name?

Montjoy: Montjoy.

King Henry: Well, I tell you what, Montjoy. You go back and tell your King that we intend to march straight up to Calais. I'm not looking for a fight, because, frankly, I've got a lot of sick, hungry men. But I won't run from a fight either. If he tries to stop us, we'll just have to fight our way through, and I don't care how big an army he's got. And as for compensation, forget it. He can have my body if he thinks he can kill me. But you can have this for your trouble. *(He hands Montjoy a small bag of money.)* Go buy yourself some socks or something.

Montjoy: Thank you, my lord. I will deliver your answer.

(Montjoy leaves.)

Gloucester: You know, we could've gone to Calais by ship. It would've been safe.

King Henry: Well, it's too late for that now. Besides, if I'm going to be the King of France, I'll march through any damn part of the country I feel like.

(They all leave.)

Act 3, Scene 7. *The French camp near Agincourt. The Constable of France, Lord Rambures, the Duke of Orleans, and the Dauphin come in. It is nighttime.*

Constable: I've got the best armour in the world.

Orleans: Yes, but I have the best horse.

Dauphin: Hey, what about my armour and my horse?

Orleans: They're both great, my lord.

Dauphin: My horse is the best. He's like Pegasus. He practically flies. Nobody's got a horse like him.

Constable: Yes, he's a fine horse, all right.

Dauphin: Fine? Why, he's legendary.

Orleans: He's not old enough to be legendary. But we can agree that he's a very good horse.

Dauphin: I once wrote a poem about him. It began, "Oh, wonder of nature..."

Orleans: That's just like a poem I read about somebody's mistress.

Dauphin: Well, then he stole the idea from me. My horse is just like a mistress.

Constable: He gave you a bit of a rough ride yesterday.

Dauphin: He was just getting used to a new saddle, that's all. Believe me, he's as dependable and faithful as a mistress.

Constable: I'm sure you're an expert, sir—on horses, I mean.

Dauphin: Just watch what we do tomorrow. I'll be filling the road with dead Englishmen.

Constable: I'll be sure to step around them.—Ach, I wish morning would come. This waiting is killing me.

Rambures: Anyone want to bet twenty prisoners with me? We'll roll dice for them.

Constable: Well, you catch them first. Then you can bet with them.

Dauphin: It's midnight. I'm going to put my armour on.

(The Dauphin leaves.)

Rambures: He wants to eat the English.

Constable: I'm sure he'll eat as many as he kills—zero.

Orleans: Oh, come on. He's a brave prince.

Constable: He talks brave.

Orleans: Wait till tomorrow. You'll see.

Constable: I don't think he'll do any harm—to the enemy, that is.

Orleans: I believe you sell him short, sir.

(A Messenger comes in.)

Messenger: My Lord Constable, the English are camped about fifteen hundred yards from here.

Constable: Those sons of bitches don't know what they're up against.—God, I wish it were morning.

Orleans: He's a stubborn one, isn't he?

Constable: Who?

Orleans: Henry.

Constable: If he had brains to match his stubbornness, he'd count the numbers and fold his tents and get out of here.

Rambures: The English are stupid, but I give them credit for courage.

Orleans: They're suicidal, that's all.

Constable: They're like mad dogs. And they eat like dogs, too.

Orleans: Except this time they're practically starving. And a lot of them are sick.

Constable: That should make it all the easier for us.—Come on, let's suit up.

Orleans: By ten o'clock we'll each have a hundred prisoners.

Rambures: Then we can gamble and use them as chips.

(The others laugh and then they all leave. But before the curtain goes down, there is an interval with the stage dimly lit in blue light, with distant noises of restless troops. A sound effect or musical background is required here — something atonal and ominous. Then curtain down. Quick segue to the next scene.)

*(The **Prologue** to Act 4 is deleted.)*

Act 4, Scene 1. *The English camp at Agincourt at night. King Henry comes in with his brothers Bedford and Gloucester.*

King Henry: The French are up early. You can hear them.

Gloucester: Yes, brother. I think we are in danger.

King Henry: Brother, you're right. So let's be as brave as the danger requires.

(Erpingham comes in.)

King Henry: Good morning, Erpingham. I wish that fine head of yours had a nice, soft pillow to rest on.

Erpingham: Nonsense! Who needs a pillow when there's all this fine, cold French ground to sleep on.

King Henry: You're still tough for an old guy. You're a good example to your men. Say, lend me your cloak, would you?

Erpingham: Of course, sir.

(Erpingham gives him his cloak.)

King Henry: Brothers, go rouse all the lords and have them meet me at my tent.

Erpingham: Shall I stay here with you, sir?

King Henry: No, no. You go with them. I want to be alone for a while.

Erpingham: God be with you, sir.

(Erpingham, Bedford, and Gloucester leave. King Henry, now wearing Erpingham's cloak, is effectively disguised. Now Pistol comes in.)

Pistol: Who goes there?

King Henry: A friend.

Pistol: Are you an officer?

King Henry: Yes, in the infantry. And you?

Pistol: Me? Why, I'm as good a gentleman as the King—and that means he's as good as me. So I love him dearly. What's your name?

King Henry: Harry LeRoy.

Pistol: What is that—Cornish?

King Henry: No, Welsh.

Pistol: Then you must know Captain Fluellen.

King Henry: Of course.

Pistol: Then tell him if we ever get back to England, I'll find him on Saint Davy's Day and knock his hat off.

King Henry: On a Welsh holiday?—Ha!—He'll take your hat and make you eat it.

Pistol: You must be his friend.

King Henry: Actually, I'm related to him.

Pistol: Well, then, you tell him this from me.—*(He blows a loud Bronx cheer.)*

King Henry: Whatever. Who shall I say sent the greeting?

Pistol: My name is Pistol.

(Pistol leaves.)

King Henry: A suitable name.

(King Henry moves to the back of the stage, and concealment is suggested. Fluellen and Gower come in from opposite sides, not noticing him.)

Gower: Captain Fluellen!

Fluellen: Shh! Not so loud! We're in a war, you know. You wouldn't have heard any unnecessary noise in the camp of Pompey the Great. Now there was a Roman worth studying. He observed all the fine points of wartime behaviour. Very serious. Very quiet. It's important to be quiet. I keep telling everyone. Sometimes I have to shout at them to be quiet.

Gower: The French aren't bothering to keep quiet.

Fluellen: They don't know any better. You don't want to be like them.

Gower: All right, then. I will speak—softly.

Fluellen: That's better.—Come. Let's check on the troops.

(Gower and Fluellen leave.)

King Henry: That Welshman is a bit of an oddball, but I like him anyway.

(Three soldiers—Bates, Court, and Williams—come in.)

Court: John Bates, I think it's almost dawn.

Bates: I don't want to look, Mr. Court.

Williams: We'll see the sun rise at least one more time—but I don't think we'll see it set.

Bates: Aye, Mr. Williams.

(King Henry stirs.)

Williams: Who goes there?

King Henry: A friend.

Williams: Who's your captain?

King Henry: Sir Thomas Erpingham.

Williams: What does he think our chances are?

King Henry: He's worried.

Bates: Has he told the King?

King Henry: No. That wouldn't be proper.

Court: I wonder if the King is worried.

King Henry: Any normal man would be. And I'm sure the King is quite normal underneath his royal clothes. Still, he's not going to show any fear, you know. It would be bad for morale.

Bates: I'll bet he wishes he were back home in England.

King Henry: I don't think so. I think he's exactly where he wants to be.

Bates: Then he's the only one who is.

King Henry: No, he's not the only one. I'm glad to be with him. After all, his cause is right.

Williams: Well, maybe it is, and maybe it isn't. If it isn't, then he'll be responsible for our deaths. And if I die in battle, I won't get a proper burial, will I?

Bates: Aye, that's for sure.

Court: We'll die with our sins unforgiven, and it'll be his fault.

King Henry: But, my friends, you're wrong. The King isn't calling men to die, only to fight. If they die with sins on their souls, it isn't his fault. Every man is responsible for his own soul. If you fear death, then clear your conscience. Then when you fight, you'll think only of duty.

Williams: Aye, you have a point, friend.

Bates: I'll do my duty, all right. I won't let the King down.

Court: Neither will I.

King Henry: I heard him swear that he'd never allow himself to be taken alive and ransomed.

Williams: What else do you expect him to say? If we're dead, we'll never know, will we?

King Henry: If he goes back on his word, I'll never trust him again.

Williams: Ha! And what's that to him? Does he care what you think? Don't be stupid.

King Henry: I should be very angry with you if we weren't about to go into battle. I'd really give it to you.

Williams: Well, then, if we live, you can look for me, and try your luck fighting with me. How's that?

King Henry: Yes. I'll agree to that. Give me something of yours to wear, and if you see me again, you can demand it back from me, and we'll settle this quarrel.

Williams: Here's one of my gloves. Now you give me one of yours.

(They exchange gloves.)

King Henry: Here.

Williams: Good. You wear mine and I'll wear yours—right on the cap. That way we'll recognize each other again. And when I see you, I'll give you a beating.

King Henry: No, I'll give you a beating.

Bates: Hey, stop it. It's the French who are the enemies, remember? And God knows how many of them are out there.

Williams: Bah!—The French!—They can't fight worth a shit. Look at the food they eat. Quiche! Is that any food for a man? And all those weird, unpronounceable things with disgusting sauces.

Bates: Yes. And they never pick up anything with their fingers. They have to be dainty, you know. A bunch of wimps, that's what they are.

Court: Let's hope so. At any rate, we'll find out soon enough. I hope the King knows what he's doing.

Williams: If he does, then we'll win. And if we win, then his cause must be right after all. God wouldn't support him otherwise.

Bates: I believe in God, and I believe in the King. *(To King Henry)* Good luck, friend.

King Henry: Good luck to you, too.

(Bates, Court, and Williams leave. King Henry is now alone.)

King Henry: Yes, my good friends, it's all on my shoulders, isn't it? The life of every man in my charge. What does an ordinary bloke know of such responsibility? He gets to sleep soundly in his little bed and follow his daily routine. He doesn't wear a crown or carry a sceptre. He doesn't sit on a throne in his royal robe. He's not the centre of pomp and ceremony. He doesn't have to decide the fate of others. He can't lead thousands of men to glory—or into the gates of hell. Only a king can do that.

(Erpingham comes in.)

Erpingham: My lord, all the lords are looking for you.

King Henry: Yes, Sir Thomas, I haven't forgotten. Get them together, and I'll meet them at my tent.

Erpingham: Very good, my lord.

(Erpingham leaves. King Henry kneels and prays.)

King Henry: God, give my soldiers courage—just one more day of courage—to face the overwhelming numbers against us. And don't punish me for what my father did to King Richard. *[Author's note: Henry IV overthrew Richard II, who died in prison later.]* At least, don't punish me today. I've given Richard a new grave. I've paid five hundred men to pray for my pardon every day. I've built two chapels in Richard's honour. And I'll do more. Have mercy on my soul and mercy on my men.

(Gloucester comes in.)

Gloucester: My lord.—It's time.

King Henry (Rising): Yes, brother. The sun is rising.

(They leave.)

Act 4, Scene 2. *In the French camp. The Dauphin comes in with Orleans, Rambures, and the Constable.*

Orleans: Time to do battle. Everyone's up.

Dauphin (Calling): Bring my horse!

Constable: Even the horses know what's up. You can hear them.

Dauphin: They're just as eager as we are. We're going to crush those English bastards.

(A Messenger comes in.)

Messenger: My lords, the English army is in the field.

Constable (Peering): They look like a bunch of scarecrows. We could probably blow on them and they'd fall down.

Dauphin: They'll probably faint before we can kill them.

Constable: This is going to be too easy. I almost feel sorry for them.

(Grandpre comes in.)

Dauphin: My Lord Grandpre! Ready for battle?

Grandpre: You bet, I'm ready, my lord Prince! Why, I've never seen such a pathetic collection of walking skeletons in my life. Even their horses are starving. Our servants could fight this battle and win.

Dauphin: Perhaps we should give the English a good breakfast out of pity—and then kill them, ha!

Constable: Where's my flag-bearer? I can't lead without a flag.—Oh, never mind. I'll borrow one from a trumpeter.—Come on, then, lords of France! Let's get this over with.

Dauphin: Yes. And be finished in time for lunch.

Rambures: Ha! You're funny, my lord.

(They all leave.)

Act 4, Scene 3. *The English camp. Gloucester, Bedford, Exeter, Erpingham, the Earl of Salisbury, and the Earl of Westmoreland come in.*

Gloucester: Where's the King?

Bedford: He went out to get a look at the French.

Westmoreland: They must have at least sixty thousand. And they're all fresh.

Salisbury: God help us! We're outnumbered six to one. *(He shakes hands with the others.)* Bedford—Gloucester—Exeter—cousins—. Whether we meet again on earth, in heaven, or in hell, let us smile regardless.

Bedford: Good luck, Salisbury.

Others: Good luck!

(Salisbury leaves.)

Exeter: Brave guy.

Bedford: And a good guy.

(King Henry comes in.)

Westmoreland: I wish I had another ten thousand men.

King Henry: No, no, no. If we're destined to die, let there be fewer of us. And if we're destined to win, more honour to us, being as few as we are. I wouldn't want to have to share my honour with any more men than we have right now. Besides, it's a narrow battlefield, in case you haven't noticed.

Exeter: Yes, we noticed.

King Henry: And the turf is muddy. Better for us, I think.—You know what today is, don't you?

Westmoreland: Saint Crispin's Day.

King Henry: That's right. And for every man who survives, Saint Crispin's Day will be his day. And every year at this time he can show off his scars and tell his friends, "I got these on Saint Crispin's Day." We're going to put this place on the map of history. And this small band of happy brothers will be remembered as heroes forever. And that includes the humblest soldier with two cows and two pigs to his name and a wooden shack to call home. Today he is as noble as any of us. And all those back in England will regret that they weren't here to share in our glory.

(Salisbury returns.)

Salisbury: Your Majesty, the French are in battle formation. They're going to charge at any moment.

King Henry: That's all right. We're ready. Wait till they get kissed by our longbows.—All right, everyone. You have your orders.

Others: Yes, my lord.

(A trumpet sounds. Montjoy, the French herald, comes in.)

King Henry: Back again, Lovejoy?

Montjoy: Montjoy, sir.

King Henry: Yes—Montjoy. Do you have another message from your King?

Montjoy: From the Constable, sir. He urges you to be sensible and negotiate your ransom. Otherwise, you'll be defeated.

King Henry: Tell your Constable if he wants a ransom that badly, he can come and kill me himself and sell my bones. But remind him of the story of the man who sold the lion's skin before he killed the lion. The lion ate him instead.

Montjoy: I shall tell him, sir.

(Montjoy leaves.)

King Henry: I don't think we'll be seeing him again.

(The Duke of York comes in. He kneels before King Henry.)

York: My lord, I beg you to let me lead the first wave.

King Henry: Cousin York, you've got it.—Now let's go, my friends. *(Looking up to heaven)* And God grant the victory however You will.

(They all leave.)

Act 4, Scene 4. *[Author's note: The original scene is scrapped. Instead, this is a Director's scene for fighting and special effects. Background music is "Mars", from Gustav Holst's "The Planets". The piece is 7 minutes long, and the Director may use all or part of it. The English Captain of Bowmen appears with several Bowmen behind him. He orders them to shoot. The Bowmen shoot many arrows. The sound of whooshing arrows is heard, plus chaotic sounds of battle. Then English and French soldiers fight hand-to-hand. The Duke of York leads the English. The French are wearing heavy armour and are less mobile than the English. The fighting moves across the stage as the English drive back the French. Quick segue to the next scene.]*

Act 4, Scene 5. *Elsewhere on the battlefield. Sounds of battle. The Constable comes in with the Dauphin, Duke of Orleans, Duke of Bourbon, and Lord Rambures.*

Constable: Merde! Merde! Merde!

Orleans: We're getting slaughtered!

Dauphin: I can't believe it! This can't be happening! This is a humiliation!

Constable: Our ranks are broken! It's a disaster!

Dauphin: How could they do this to us! English bastards!

Bourbon: After this, there's nothing to live for. I'm going in there, and I don't care if I die. At least I'll die with my honour.

Orleans: We still have more men than they do. If we could just restore some order—

Bourbon: To hell with it. There's no order left. We're lords. We have to fight. And if we die, we die.—Come on.

(They all leave.)

Act 4, Scene 6. *Elsewhere on the battlefield. Sounds of battle. King Henry comes in with Exeter and Soldiers.*

King Henry: We're beating them! But it's not over yet. There are still a lot of French out there.

Exeter: My lord, the Duke of York—*(He stops, overcome with emotion.)*

King Henry: Is York all right? He was in the thick of it. He was all covered with blood.

Exeter (Emotionally): He died, my lord—beside his cousin, the Earl of Suffolk. Suffolk died first, and York knelt beside him and said—"Wait for me, cousin. We'll go to heaven together."—Then he saw me and he took my hand and said—"Tell the King—I die happy."—Then he died.

King Henry: York—Suffolk.—Why must such good men die?—I'll miss them.

(Alarms and sounds of battle.)

King Henry: I think the French are going to attack again!

Exeter: What'll we do with the prisoners? We must have several thousand of them.

King Henry: We can't manage that many prisoners and defend ourselves at the same time. The prisoners will have to be killed. Only spare the nobles.

(They all leave. Quick segue to the next scene.)

Act 4, Scene 7. *Sounds of battle. King Henry comes in with Warwick, Gloucester, Exeter, Fluellen, an English Herald, and the Duke of Bourbon, who is a prisoner.*

King Henry: I can still see French cavalry on that hill.—Herald, I want you to go to them and find out what their intentions are. Tell them if they don't leave the field, we'll kill all the lords we've taken prisoner.—Wait, hold on.

(Montjoy comes in.)

King Henry: Back again, Montjoy? Collecting ransom?

(The English Lords laugh.)

Montjoy: No, my lord. I come to ask if you will show us the kindness of allowing us to collect our dead.

King Henry: Well, I don't know. Is this battle over or not? I can still see some of your cavalry.

King Henry: We concede, sir. You have won.

King Henry: It was God's will.—What is this place called?

Montjoy: Agincourt, sir.

King Henry: Then this will be remembered for all time as the Battle of Agincourt—won by the English on Saint Crispin’s Day. *(To the English Herald)* Herald, you go with him and bring me back a count of the dead on both sides.

(The English Herald and Montjoy leave. Then Williams comes in, remaining apart.)

King Henry: You—soldier—come over here.

(Williams approaches. He is wearing King Henry’s glove on his cap.)

King Henry: Why are you wearing that glove on your cap?

Williams: Oh—this?—Well, my lord, you see, I had a quarrel with another man, and we exchanged gloves so that when we see each other again, we can finish it—if you gather my meaning, sir.

King Henry: Ah—going to punch him in the nose, are you?

Williams: I’ll give him a wizard prang, I will, sir.

King Henry: Fluellen, what do you think? Should he fight the man or not?

Fluellen: Absolutely, sir. It’s a matter of honour.

King Henry: But suppose the other man happens to be of a higher rank?

Fluellen: Rank doesn’t enter into it, my lord.

King Henry (To Williams): Then you do what you have to do, soldier.

Williams: Thank you, my lord. I surely will.

King Henry: Who’s your captain?

Williams: Captain Gower, sir.

King Henry: If you see him, tell him to come and see me.

Williams: I will, sir. God save you, sir.

(Williams leaves.)

King Henry: Fluellen, I want you to do something for me.

Fluellen: Anything, my lord.

(King Henry hands him Williams’s glove, previously exchanged when King Henry was disguised.)

King Henry: This glove belonged to one of the French lords. I want you to stick it on your cap. If any man recognizes it, you’ll know he’s an enemy and you’re to arrest him.

Fluellen: I shall certainly do that, my lord.

King Henry: You know Captain Gower, don’t you?

Fluellen: Oh, yes, sir.

King Henry: Good. See if you can find him and bring him to me.

Fluellen: I will, sir.

(Fluellen leaves.)

King Henry: Warwick–Gloucester–go follow him. That glove I gave him belongs to the soldier who was just here. They’re bound to run into each other. If they do, make sure nobody gets hurt.–*(To Exeter)* Uncle, come with me.

(They all leave.)

Act 4, Scene 8. *Elsewhere on the field. Williams comes in with Gower.*

Williams: The King wants to see you, Captain. No doubt, he intends to reward you with a knighthood, I should think.

Gower: Oh, that would be fantastic!

(Fluellen comes in, wearing Williams’s glove.)

Fluellen: Ah, there you are, Captain Gower. The King’s looking for you. I expect you’re in for some sort of reward.

(Williams reacts to the sight of the glove.)

Williams: Excuse me, sir—but do you recognize this glove? *(Indicating the one on his own cap.)*

Fluellen: No. It look like any other glove to me.

Williams: Well, I recognize that one! *(Indicating the one Fluellen is wearing)* And I have something for you!

(He punches Fluellen.)

Fluellen: Why, you’re a damned traitor! And I arrest you in the name of the King!

(Fluellen is about to grab Williams, but Gower intervenes.)

Gower: Whoa! Hold on! What’s all this about?

Fluellen: This man is a traitor! He’s in with the French!

Williams: You’re crazy! I’m no traitor!

Fluellen: You recognized this glove! That proves it!

(Warwick and Gloucester come in.)

Warwick: What’s all the commotion here?

Gower: Something about gloves, but I don’t understand it.

Fluellen: My Lord Warwick, this man recognized the glove I was wearing on my cap. The King told me to look out for traitors, and he's one of them.—Here comes the King now. He'll tell you.

(King Henry and Exeter come in.)

King Henry: What's the trouble here? Are we having a fight?

Fluellen: My lord, this man recognized the glove you gave me. He's a traitor.

Williams: Of course, I recognized it. It's my glove.—See? Here's the one that matches it. *(He shows the matching glove to King Henry.)* I told you about the glove, my lord. I told you I gave it to the man I quarreled with and I'd fight him if I saw him again. That's him. *(Indicating Fluellen)*

Fluellen: He's a liar, my lord. You gave me this glove. Tell him.

King Henry (To Williams): Give me that glove on your cap. *(Williams hands him the glove. King Henry takes out his own glove and compares them.)* It's mine. I was the one you exchanged gloves with last night. You swore to settle things with me if you ever saw me again—remember?

Fluellen: You should punish him for that, my lord.

Williams: Oh—but—your Majesty—I didn't know it was you. It was dark, and you were dressed like any other soldier. I certainly wouldn't have said anything to offend you if I'd known.

(King Henry laughs. He hands one of his gloves to Exeter.)

King Henry: Uncle, fill this glove with gold coins and give it to this soldier.—What's your name, soldier?

Williams: Michael Williams, sir.

King Henry: You're a good Englishman.—Fluellen, you said rank didn't enter into it—remember?

Fluellen (Embarrassed): Oh—well—I never imagined—

King Henry: Now you'll make peace with this fellow, all right?

Fluellen: I have to admit he's got heart. *(He reaches into his pocket and pulls out a few coins.)* Here, soldier. Here's twelve pence for you. Just stay out of fights from now on.

Williams: I don't want your money.

Fluellen: Oh, go on, take it. Get your shoes fixed or something.

(The English Herald comes in.)

King Henry: Herald, what's the count for the French?

(The Herald hands him a paper.)

Herald: I've written it down, my lord.

King Henry: Uncle, which nobles did we capture?

Exeter: Besides Bourbon, we captured Orleans and Bouciqualt, and a bunch of other lords and knights.

King Henry: According to this, the French have lost eighteen thousand—including a lot of nobles.—The Constable of France—Chatillon—Rambures—Bar—Brabant—Grandpre—Fauconberg—Beaumont—My God, it's the cream of the aristocracy. (*To the Herald*) What about our own?

(*The Herald hands him another paper.*)

King Henry (Looking at both sides): That's all?

Herald: Yes, my lord.

King Henry: A few hundred. That's it. It's a miracle.

Exeter: You can say that again.

King Henry: When we march through the villages, I don't want our men bragging about this victory. It was the work of God.

Fluellen: That it was, sir—although superior tactics played a part.

King Henry: We'll give the dead a proper burial, and then it's on to Calais—and home to England. We're the luckiest soldiers who ever returned from France.

(*They all leave.*)

Act 5, Scene 1. [*Author's note: This scene replaces the **Prologue** to Act 5 and the original Scene 1.] France. Pistol comes in and sits on a rock at mid-stage. He looks sullen. He speaks directly to the audience.*

Pistol: Well—here's what happened since you last saw me. First, we went back to England. The King got a hero's welcome, as you would've expected. It was quite a turnout. You should've been there. I tried to get as close to the King as possible, but Gower and Fluellen kept pushing me away. So I just talked to anyone I could—you know, all about my heroic exploits in the battle—which was all bullshit, of course. There was one day devoted to public executions, and that was really cool. (*He takes out a paper and refers to it.*) I saved this as a souvenir—"Public Notice of Executions".—I don't even know these people. Maybe you know them.—Dalton McGuinty, hanged for treason—Chris Bentley, hanged for treason—Philip Weller, hanged for treason—Mark Schueder, hanged for treason—Paul Breeze, hanged for treason—Oh, and there was one woman—Erica Wilson. She was hanged for engaging in sodomy with a nig—oops! Ha, ha! Can't say that word any more. It's considered hate speech. (*He puts the paper away.*) Okay, second thing—the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire—his name is Sigismund—he came to England to arrange a peace between England and France. So now we're back in France. And probably this whole deal will be sealed with a marriage. That's usually the way countries settle their differences.—Last thing—I just found out my wife died. You remember—the hostess of the Boar's Head Tavern. So now I've got no source of income when I'm out of the army. About the only thing I'm qualified to do is be a thief or a pimp. But hey, there's always room for one more in England.—Oh, let me show you my scars, ha, ha. (*He lifts up his shirt.*) Actually, I fell on a rake. But I'll say they're

war wounds. Plenty of suckers will believe it, and I'll find some way to take advantage of them. Hey, a man's gotta do what a man's gotta do, right?

(He leaves.)

Act 5, Scene 2. *The castle of the King of France. From one side, Henry, Exeter, Bedford, Gloucester, Clarence, Warwick, and Westmoreland come in; from the other side, the King of France, Queen Isabel, Princess Katherine, her waiting-lady, Alice, and the Duke of Burgundy come in.*

King Henry: Peace to everyone—my lord King of France, your Highness the Queen, your Highness Princess Katherine, and my lord Duke of Burgundy, who arranged this meeting.

France: And peace to you, too, my lord King and all English lords.

Queen Isabel: My lord King of England, I have waited so long for this day, to see an end to war between our countries.

King Henry: Madam, we feel exactly the same way.

Burgundy: My lords—my ladies—I have worked hard to make this meeting possible, because we have not had peace in France for a long time. And because of that, our crops are in ruin, our grapes are sour, the peasants sleep with their animals, our soldiers suffer from post-traumatic stress disorders, our children are deformed, widows and orphans wander aimlessly in search of crusts of bread, our scholars have become babbling lunatics, the birds refuse to sing, the cows refuse to give milk, and an evil yellow fog hangs over the land and fills our people with despair, lethargy, and thoughts of suicide.

King Henry: Well, we certainly want to put an end to that, don't we? I've written down our demands, and if you agree to them, everything will be just peachy.

France: I need to review the terms with your lords. May we take a meeting now?

King Henry: Of course.—Exeter, brothers, Warwick, and Westmoreland—you'll sit down with the King and go over the details. *(To the Queen)* Madam, will you join the conference or stay here?

Queen: I'll sit down with the men and make sure they come to an agreement. But Katherine will stay here. That way you can get to know each other better. Alice will stay, too.

(Everyone leaves except King Henry, Katherine, and Alice.)

King Henry: So, Katherine, how does a soldier like me win the heart of a French princess? What should I say to you?

Katherine: Oh, your Majesty, mon an-glay is not so good. I don't want you to laugh at me.

King Henry: Well, my fran-say is probably worse than your an-glay. But that's all right. We can always speak in, uh, body language, heh, heh.

Katherine: Body language? *(To Alice)* Qu'est-ce que c'a veut dire?

Alice: Le langage du corps, madame.

Katherine: Oh?—Je ne comprends pas.

Alice: Monsieur, we don't understand this.

King Henry: Never mind.—Katherine, just tell me if you love me—at least a little.

Katherine: Monsieur, I cannot say.

King Henry: Aw, darn it. I'm no good at fancy love speeches. I can't recite love poems or serenade a woman on a mandolin. And maybe I'm not the handsomest guy around. But inside, I have a good heart, and that's what matters. All I ask is that you take me as I am and give me a chance. How about it?

Katherine: But you were enemy of France, no?

King Henry: Not any more, Kate. I love France. Every bit of it. That's why I want all of it. And if you love France, you must love me, too, because if France is mine, then France is yours, too. And we belong to each other.

Katherine: Monsieur, you are confusing me.

King Henry: Okay, wait. Let me try in French.—Uh—quand je suis en possession de la France—uh—oh, forget it. Just tell me, what do you feel in your heart? Could you love me? Will you accept me?

Katherine: I must do what my father decides.

King Henry: Oh, he'll approve. I'm sure of it. Come on, now, Kate, give us a kiss.

Katherine: Oh, no, no, no! We do not do the kiss before the marriage in France.

King Henry: Never mind that. We're royals. We make the rules.—Um—je veux vous baiser.

Alice (Embarrassed): Oh, monsieur! That has two meanings in French. One meaning is to kiss. And the other meaning is—Oh! I cannot say it.

King Henry: Ha, ha! No—of course, I mean to kiss her. The other one comes after the wedding, eh? Ha, ha! (*He kisses Katherine.*) There! Done!

Katherine: Oh, monsieur!

(The King of France, the Queen, Burgundy, and the English Lords return.)

Burgundy: So, your Majesty, are you communicating well enough with Lady Katherine?

King Henry: Oh, yes, very well. (*To the King of France*) So, my lord, what do you say? Do I get to marry your daughter?

France: Yes. I approve. And we have an agreement on all the terms.

Exeter (To King Henry): That means you are now the heir to the throne of France, my lord.

France: Yes. And when you and my daughter have children, our two countries will be like one big, happy family.

Queen: May God bless this marriage. And may all Englishmen love France and all Frenchmen love England.

The Lords: Hear! Hear!

King Henry: We'll make arrangements for the wedding at once. And when I pledge my love to Katherine, I will also pledge my loyalty to France. And may God bless us all.

The Lords: Amen!

*(Trumpets. They all leave. No curtain down. Quick segue to the **Epilogue.**)*

Epilogue. *The Chorus (narrator) comes in where the previous parties were standing.*

Chorus: How did the English win at Agincourt? Was it because of Henry, his soldiers, the mistakes of the French, the hand of God, or just plain luck? We leave it to you to decide. Henry and Katherine produced one child, Henry the Sixth, who became King of England and the disputed King of France. His was a complex and tragic story, which we must save for another time. Our King Henry the Fifth died in France at the age of thirty-five and was buried in Westminster Abbey, in London. Please forgive whatever wrongs he may have done, and remember him for his courage and his glory.

(Curtain down)

END

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